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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/009,385	07/05/2002	Andreas Stiegler	West.6492	7062
50811 7590 02/20/2007 O'SHEA, GETZ & KOSAKOWSKI, P.C. 1500 MAIN ST. SUITE 912 SPRINGFIELD, MA 01115			EXAMINER AUSTIN, SHELTON W	
			ART UNIT 2609	PAPER NUMBER

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/20/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/009,385

Applicant(s)

STIEGLER ET AL.

Examiner

Shelton Austin

Art Unit

2609

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 July 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 05 July 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/3/2001 & 5/18/2006.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 3 recites the limitation "by the bit stream decoder of the data sink" in lines 2 and 3 of claim 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 4 recites the limitation "wherein the data sink with its bit stream decoder is separate from the other data sinks" in lines 1 and 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 5 recites the limitation "the data sink is connected to its associated output unit" in lines 1 and 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 6 recites the limitations "the bit stream decoder associated with the data sink", "after the separation stage of the data sink" and "in the other data sinks" in lines 1-3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for these limitations in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 7-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shaunfield ('484) in view of Ueki (US 6,310,848, hereinafter '848).

In regards to claims 1, 9, 11 and 16, '484 teaches a local network with a plurality of subscribers each connected to a ring network by an optical data line to transmit data (Fig. 2; col. 5, lines 41-46), comprising: a first subscriber is configured as a data source to provide compressed audio and video data (Fig. 2—53; col. 6, lines 15-20); a second subscriber configured to receive transmitted audio data (Fig. 2—51-57, 70, 72); a third subscriber configured to receive the transmitted video data (Fig. 2—51-57; 70, 72), a fourth subscriber that includes a bit stream decoder decode the incoming compressed audio and video data and provide decompressed data (Fig. 2—50; col. 4, lines 40-44; col. 7, lines 8-11); and a control unit that controls the transmission of said decompressed video data signal and said decompressed audio data signal onto the ring network (Fig. 2—44; col. 7, lines 19-22). The control node of '484 contains a demultiplexer that is capable of separating multiplexed signals, such as audio and video, but fails to specifically teach a separating stage that receives said decompressed data and separates audio and video data within said compressed data to provide a decompressed video data signal and a decompressed audio data signal.

In analogous art, '848 teaches a recording/reproducing apparatus that includes a decompressing circuit with an A/V decoder for decompressing the audio/video data.

The apparatus also includes a separation circuit that separates the decompressed data into audio and video signals (col. 6, lines 61-67).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484 to include a separation stage for separating the decompressed audio data from the decompressed video data in order to supply the video data to a display device, i.e. a monitor, and the audio data to a audio reproducing device, i.e. a speaker (col. 6, line 64-col. 7, line 4).

In regards to claim 2, '484 fails to teach a separation stage, and wherein the bit stream decoder is situated before the separation stage in the data stream of the compressed audio and video data.

In analogous art, '848 teaches a bit stream decoder is situated before the separation stage in the data stream of the compressed audio and video data (Fig. 1; col. 8, lines 31-34).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484 to have the bit stream decoder situated before the separation stage so that the incoming compressed signal can be decompressed via the bit stream decoder and then separated into audio and video signals via the separation circuit (col. 8, lines 31-34).

The examiner rejects claim 4 as well as can be understood by the claim. '484 teaches the local network of claim 1, wherein the data sink with its bit stream decoder is separate from the other data sinks and is connected through an optical data line (Fig. 2—24 & 50-57).

The examiner rejects claim 5 as well as can be understood by the claim. '484 teaches the local network of claim 4, characterized in that the data sink is connected to its associated output unit for reproducing one type of data, through a common optical data line for transmitting audio as well as video data (Fig. 2; col. 7, lines 10-11).

In regards to claims 7 and 12, '484 teaches a decoder that decompresses incoming signals, but fails to teach that the decoder comprises an MPEG-1 decoder or an MPEG-2 decoder.

In analogous art, '848 teaches a decompressing circuit with a decoder for decompresses the incoming signal (col. 8, lines 31-33), where the signal is either an MPEG-2 signal or a MPEG-1 signal (col. 15, lines 25-27).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484 to include an MPEG-1 decoder, or an MPEG-2 decoder, in order to decompress signals that are of normal quality MPEG-1 type, or of high quality MPEG-2 type (col. 15, lines 26-27).

In regards to claim 8, '484 teaches a decoder that decompresses incoming signals, the signals being compressed according to JPEG. '484 fails, however, to teach that the decoder can be configured as an MPEG-1 decoder, an MPEG-2 decoder, an AC-3 decoder, or an JPEG decoder depending upon the transmitted control data received over the ring network by the bit stream decoder.

In analogous art, '848 teaches a decompressing circuit with a decoder for decompresses the incoming signal (col. 8, lines 31-33), where the signal is compressed

in either of a MPEG-2 format, a MPEG-1 format, or an ac-3 format (col. 8, lines 49-51; col. 15, lines 25-27).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484 to have a bit stream decoder that can be configured as an MPEG-1 decoder, an MPEG-2 decoder, or an AC-3 decoder in order to decompress signals that are of normal quality MPEG-1 type, of high quality MPEG-2 type, or are audio signals.

In regards to claim 10, '484 teaches the method of claim 9, wherein said step of receiving, decompressing, processing and transmitting occur in the same data sink (col. 4, lines 40-46).

In regards to claim 13, '484 teaches a decoder that decompresses incoming signals, but fails to teach that the decoder comprises an AC-3 decoder.

In analogous art, '848 teaches a decompressing circuit with a decoder for decompresses the incoming signal (col. 8, lines 31-33), where the signal is compressed in an ac-3 format (col. 8, lines 49-51).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484 to have a bit stream decoder that comprises an AC-3 decoder in order to decompress signals that are audio signals.

In regards to claim 14, '484 teaches a decoder that decompresses incoming signals, the signals being compressed according to JPEG (col. 21, lines 65-66).

In regards to claim 15, '484 fails to specifically teach the bit stream decoder comprises a video decoder and an audio decoder.

In analogous art, '848 teaches a recording/reproducing apparatus that includes a decompressing circuit with an A/V decoder for decompressing the audio/video data (col. 6, lines 44 & 61-64).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484 to include an audio and video decoder in the bit stream decoder for decompressing audio data and video data in order to supply the audio data to a audio reproducing device, i.e. a speaker, and the video data to a display device, i.e. a monitor (col. 6, line 64-col. 7, line 4).

5. Claims 1, 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shaunfield ('484) in view of Ueki ('848), and further in view of Bledsoe (US 4,646,061, hereinafter '061).

'484, in view of '848, teaches the limitations of claims 1 and 2 for the reasons above.

In regards to claim 3, '484 teaches several other data sinks which forward the data conducted to them by the bit stream decoder of the control node to the output units associated with them, but fails to teach the other data sinks do not have any bit stream decoders.

In analogous art, '061 teaches a system that includes a plurality of data sources (Fig. 1—10,11,13,15) that produce outputs that are to be encoded and transmitted across a medium, such as a fiber optic link. A compression decoder (Fig. 1—22) receives the multiplexed output and extracts the frequency code and sends the code to the correct port, which contains a frequency decoder (Fig. 1—24,26,28,30). After being

decoded, the digital output data is sent to a data sink (Fig. 1—25,27,29,31) that is connected to the port (col. 3, line 58-col. 4, line 50).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484, in view of '848, to include data sinks which do not include bit stream decoders since a single compression decoder is used no matter what data source is employed at the transmitter, allowing the need to only decode a single frequency of occurrence table universally applicable to many data sources and data sinks (col. 11, lines 59-67).

6. Claims 1 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shaunfield ('484) in view of Bigam (US 5,544,161, hereinafter '161).

In regards to claim 1, '484 teaches a local network with a plurality of subscribers each connected to a ring network by an optical data line to transmit data (Fig. 2; col. 5, lines 41-46), comprising: a first subscriber is configured as a data source to provide compressed audio and video data (Fig. 2—53; col. 6, lines 15-20); a second subscriber configured to receive transmitted audio data (Fig. 2—51-57, 70, 72); a third subscriber configured to receive the transmitted video data (Fig. 2—51-57; 70, 72), a fourth subscriber that includes a bit stream decoder decode the incoming compressed audio and video data and provide decompressed data (Fig. 2—50; col. 4, lines 40-44; col. 7, lines 8-11); and a control unit that controls the transmission of said decompressed video data signal and said decompressed audio data signal onto the ring network (Fig. 2—44; col. 7, lines 19-22). The control node of '484 contains a demultiplexer that is capable of separating multiplexed signals, such as audio and video, but fails to specifically teach a

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separating stage that receives said decompressed data and separates audio and video data within said compressed data to provide a decompressed video data signal and a decompressed audio data signal.

In analogous art, '161 teaches an MPEG system demultiplexer in a digital entertainment terminal attached to a broadcast ring that recognizes audio and video packets in the data stream, separates and routes them to an video decoder and an audio decoder (Figs. 2, 5 and 8; col. 30, lines 45-52).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention as made to modify the invention of '484 to have the multiplexer separate the audio and video data in order to send the separated signals to a video decoder and an audio decoder in order transmit the decompressed data to appropriate output devices for reproduction (col. 30, lines 54-57).

The examiner rejects claim 6 as well as can be understood by the claim. '161 teaches that the decoder is situated in the data stream of the compressed audio and video data after the separations stage (MPEG system demultiplexer) of the data sink, and that at least one other bit stream decoder decodes the separated data (Fig. 8—827, 829 and 831).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of '484 to have the separation stage located before the decoders in order to supply audio data to an audio decoder and video data to a video decoder to decompress each set of signals separately and transmit the

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decompressed signals to appropriate output devices for reproduction (col. 30, lines 54-57).

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shelton Austin whose telephone number is (571) 272-9385. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:30-5:00. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays from 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey Stucker whose telephone number is (571) 272-0911, can be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:30-5:00. The supervisor can also be reached on alternate Fridays from 7:30-4:00. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Shelton Austin

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SA.



JEFFREY STUCKER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER